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Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 104911

LIMDIS

TOSEC 832

FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO MOSCOW TAIPEI TOKYO
HONG KONG CINCPAC FROM PEKING 20 MAY 74:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0824

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR CH TW
SUBJECT: GOVERNORS' MEETING WITH LI HSIEN-NIEN

REF: PEKING 0823

1. ON MAY 18 GOVERNORS HAD HOUR AND TWENTY MINUTE MEETING
WITH VICE PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN. LI MADE LITTLE
EFFORT TO BE JOVIAL, APPEARED ELDERLY AND RATHER
CRUSTY, AND WAS BRUTALLY FRANK ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES.
AFTER USUAL SMALL TALK, LI DISMISSED SEVERAL QUESTIONS
ON TRADE AND MOVED DIRECTLY TO QUESTION OF TAIWAN,
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TAKING A LINE SIMILAR TO CH'IAO KUAN-HUA (REFTEL)

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BUT AVOIDING THE IMPLICATION CHIAO LEFT THAT LACK OF
PROGRESS ON TAIWAN ISSUE WILL AFFECT EXCHANGES OR TRADE.

2. ON TAIWAN, LI SAID THAT PRESIDENT NIXON IN SHANGHAI
COMMUNIQUE ACCEPTED VIEW THAT CHINESE ON BOTH SIDES
AGREE THERE IS ONLY ONE CHINA. QUESTION, HE SAID, WAS
WHICH IS LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF THAT COUNTRY. HE
STATED TAIWAN IS ONLY A PROVINCE WITH POPULATION OF
SOME SIXTEEN MILLION PEOPLE, WHILE ON MAINLAND "SOME
SAY THERE ARE 700 MILLION, SOME SAY 750 OR 800 MILLION,
AND SOME EVEN SAY MORE". LI REAFFIRMED THAT PRC WOULD
NOT ACCEPT ONE CHINA-ONE TAIWAN, TWO CHINAS, OR THE
VIEW THAT STATUS OF TAIWAN NOT DETERMINED. STATUS OF
TAIWAN DETERMINED LONG AGO, HE SAID, "AND WE MADE THAT
CLEAR TO YOUR PRESIDENT".

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION WHETHER THERE COULD BE A
SETTLEMENT BETWEEN TAIWAN AND PRC, LI SAID "WE SHOULDN'T
BE IMPATIENT. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THERE MIGHT BE
FIGHTING, BUT YOU MIGHT NOT BE FOR FIGHTING". WHEN
GOVERNORS INDICATED THEY WERE NOT AND FAVORED A PEACEFUL
SOLUTION, LI COMMENTED "THE KUOMINGTANG ARE A BUNCH OF
REACTIONARIES WHO WON'T LISTEN". RESPONDING TO A GOVERNOR'S
QUESTION WHETHER A SETTLEMENT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE AFTER THE
PASSING OF CHIANG KAI-SHEK, LI SAID, "IF YOU DON'T USE
A BROOM TO REMOVE DUST, IT WON'T GO AWAY BY ITSELF". LI
CONCLUDED THAT FURTHER NORMALIZATION IS UP TO U.S.,
NOTING THAT CHINA HAD NORMALIZED RELATIONS WITH JAPAN
BUT IT STILL MAINTAINS TRADE CONTACTS WITH TAIWAN.

4. ASKED WHAT OTHER PROBLEMS EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO
GOVERNMENTS BESIDES TAIWAN, LI COMMENTED THERE ARE
BOUND TO BE PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCES IN OUR
TWO SOCIAL SYSTEMS. HE AGREED THAT THIS SHOULD NOT PREVENT
OUR COEXISTING, BUT SAID "WE WILL CRITICIZE YOU".
LI NOTED THAT TENG HSIAO-PING HAD DONE SO AT SPECIAL
UNGA, AND SAID ALL NATIONS MUST BE EQUAL REGARDLESS OF
SIZE. WHEN ASKED IF HE THOUGHT U.S. HAS EXPANSIONIST
AMBITIONS, LI REPLIED WITH A BLUNT "YES". ASKED WHERE,
HE POINTED TO INDOCHINA, SAYING PEOPLE OF THAT REGION
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SHOULD BE LEFT TO SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS. WHEN HE
NOTED THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAD PULLED OUT U.S. TROOPS
AND INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON WAS LARGELY TO
BLAME, A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNOR STATED HE DISAGREED. LI
REPLIED THAT HE DIDN'T CARE IF HE DID. GOVERNORS LATER
RETURNED TO QUESTION OF U.S. EXPANSIONISM, ASKING IF
THERE WERE OTHER AREAS WHERE CHINA CONSIDERED U.S. AN
EXPANSIONIST POWER. LI REPLIED THAT U.S. HAD TROOPS

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ON TAIWAN AND ELSEWHERE ON FOREIGN SOIL. WHEN GOVERNORS ARGUED THAT STATIONING OF U.S. TROOPS ABROAD WAS FOR DEFENSIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND NOT EXPANSIONIST, LI SAID SIMPLY, "I DON'T AGREE".

5. AT SEVERAL POINTS DURING THE CONVERSATION LI ATTACKED THE SOVIET UNION. HE SAID "THAT POLAR BEAR TO THE NORTH" WAS ALSO PRACTICING EXPANSIONISM AND CLAIMED ITS BOUNDARIES EXTENDED TO THE MEDITERRANEAN. LI DECLARED THERE ARE A MILLION SOVIET TROOPS "IN ASIA", BUT SAID ONE MILLION TROOPS NOT NEARLY ENOUGH TO FIGHT A WAR. HE NOTED THAT THESE TROOPS DIRECTED NOT ONLY AT CHINA, BUT U.S. AND JAPAN AS WELL. AT ANOTHER POINT LI SAID SOME PEOPLE WORRY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE USSR MIGHT ATTACK CHINA, BUT PR FEELS THE FOCUS OF SOVIET EXPANSIONISM IS TOWARD THE WEST IN EUROPE.

6. THE GOVERNORS TURNED THE DISCUSSION TO JAPAN, ASKING WHETHER, IN VIEW OF THE SOVIET THREAT, CHINA WOULD OBJECT TO JAPAN'S EXPANDING ITS MILITARY FORCES. LI REPLIED THAT IF JAPAN WENT IN FOR MILITARISM, PRC COULD NOT AGREE, BUT IT WOULD NOT OBJECT TO A BUILD-UP OF FORCES FOR SELF DEFENSE. HE NOTED THAT THERE ARE VOICES IN JAPAN KEEN ON PRACTICING MILITARISM. IF THEY ENGAGE IN MILITARISM, HE SAID, "THAT WOULD ALSO NOT BE GOOD FOR YOU". HE CONCLUDED THAT CHINA'S PRESENT RELATIONSHIP WITH JAPAN WAS "NOT BAD" (PU TSUO).

7. AT THE OUTSET OF THE CONVERSATION LI HAD DUCKED AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON PREMIER CHOU'S HEALTH WHEN GOV EVANS CONVEYED THE PRESIDENT'S REGARDS TO CHOU AND SAID HE HOPED HE WAS IN GOOD HEALTH. ON SAYING GOODBYE AT THE DOOR, LI REPLIED TO ANOTHER EXPRESSION OF GOOD WISHES
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FOR THE PREMIER'S HEALTH BY SAYING CHOU IS AN OLD MAN AND HAS BEEN SICK. HE NOTED WRYLY THAT IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT THE PRESS WOULD SPECULATE ON THE SUBJECT. LI REITERATED CH'IAO KUAN-HUA'S STATEMENT THAT SUCH FRANK EXCHANGES OF VIEWS ARE POSSIBLE ONLY ON A PRIVATE BASIS AND SUBSTANCE OF DISCUSSIONS SHOULD NOT BE REVEALED TO PRESS. BRUCE UNQUOTE RUSH

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